

## Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Eliza Symonds Bell, December 6, 1878, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Mrs. Alexander Melville Bell (DECEMBER 1878 — TELEPHONE SUITS) Cambridge, Dec. 6th, 1878 My dear Mrs. Bell:

I hope you have received my letters and know that Alec has been doing very well. Did I tell you that Alec left the hospital Monday? and had been here with me since. I do not know how his wound is; it looks just the same to me, but we cannot tell until the doctor has seen it. I hope he will go to him today, it is not worse at all events, and the physicians say we cannot expect that such a wound in such a place will completely heal for a long time; when they saw it last they said it had closed so far with remarkable quickness. I don't think Alec suffers much, if at all, except when he has been doing too much, and when I dress the wound, and then it is more through distrust of my ability than anything else.

Alec has been hard at work at his preliminary statement for the Patent Office, looking over old models and old letters. One model he discovered was of a telephone plate two feet square! Alec is very much delighted with the system of the Telephone Despatch Co. They have a large central office in Washington St. Boston, and branch offices in different parts of the city and in Cambridge. Wires go to the shops and theatres and to private houses and people can talk from their houses to the shopmen or to their friends, or if they have not a wire, talk from the office to their friend at another office or house, or have a message telephoned for them to the office nearest their friend's house, and thence sent to them by messenger, just like the telegraph boys. We have received a very good offer from the Western Union to combine; whether we accept no one knows; neither Alec nor I want to have anything to do with the Western Union, but we cannot of course decide until we know more about it.

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Are you not coming to Washington? I hate to let Alec travel to Brantford in the winter, there is so much danger of his taking cold in an unhealed wound, but of course he must go to you if you cannot come to him, he is so anxious to see you.

Elsie has a little cold. There is an epidemic among babies here; they have a little inflammation in the middle ear, and Elsie has it, and we were much alarmed yesterday, but Dr. Blake says it is getting well as fast as possible, and with care there is nothing to worry about. She is bright and happy and grows daily more winning. She is considered a beauty here.

I hope you are quite well and enjoying this bright beautiful day after the rain and storm of the past week.

With love to Mr. Bell and the Misses Symonds, Affectionately, Your daughter, MABEL  
P.S. We go to New York early next week for a few days after Alec has read a paper on "The Determination" etc, but I forget the rest, something very learned, before the American Academy of Arts and Sciences here.